amar chitra katha

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JAYADEVA

— AUTHOR OF THE FAMOUS GITA-GOVINDA



Jayadeva, the celebrated author of the Gita-Govinda, lived in the second half of the twelfth century. The Gita-Govinda describes the love of Radha and Krishna. It has been hailed as a master-piece.

The Gita-Govinda has been translated into all the Indian languages and also into German and English. A number of schools of medieval Indian painting have been inspired by the lyrics of Jayadeva and some of the best paintings depict scenes from the Gita-Govinda. Songs from the Gita-Govinda have been set to music and dance.

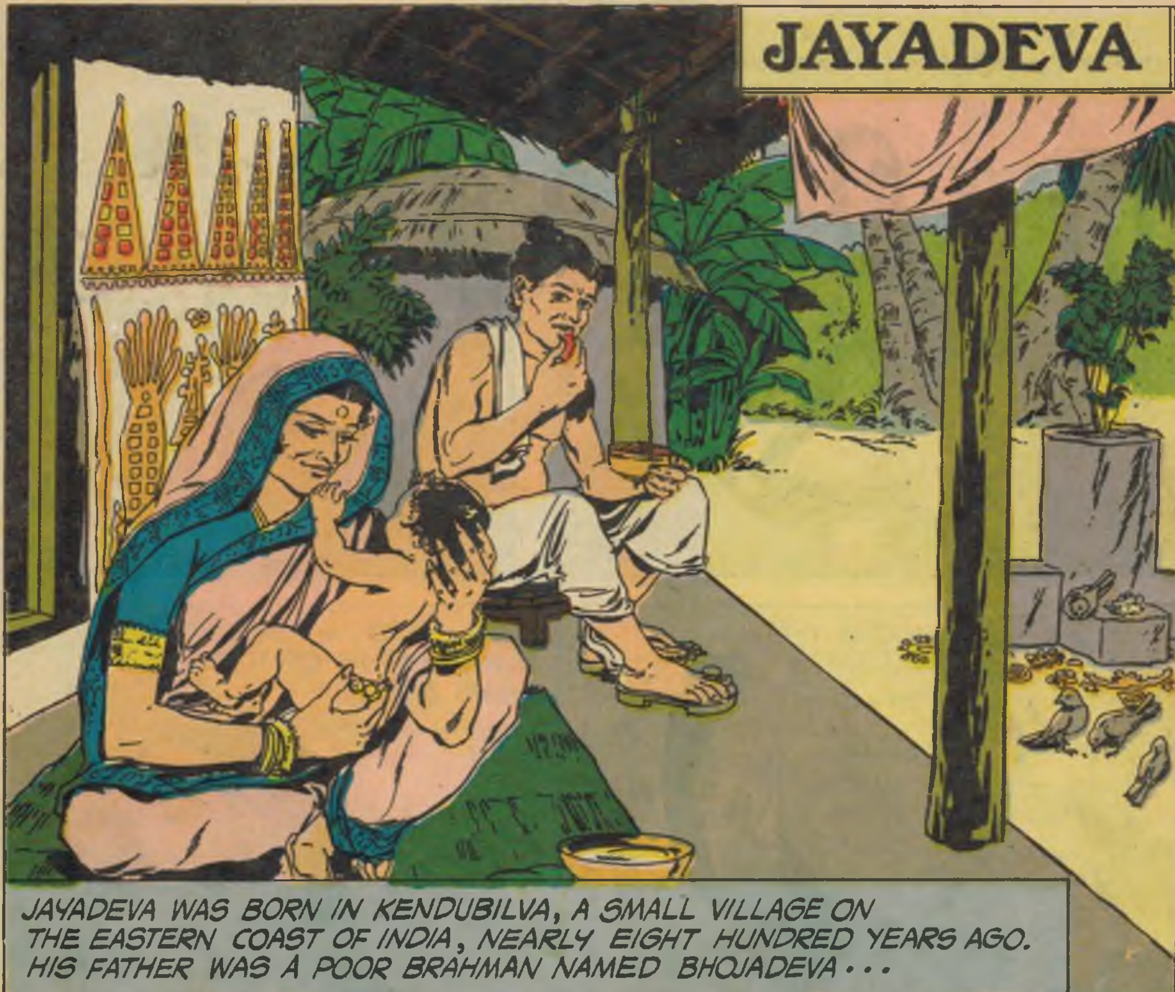
Jayadeva's real origin is lost in a mist of legend, but tradition has it that he was born in the village Kendubilva. While some scholars identify this place as the modern Kenduli in the Birbhum district of West Bengal, others identify it with the village bearing the same name, situated in the Puri district of Orissa.

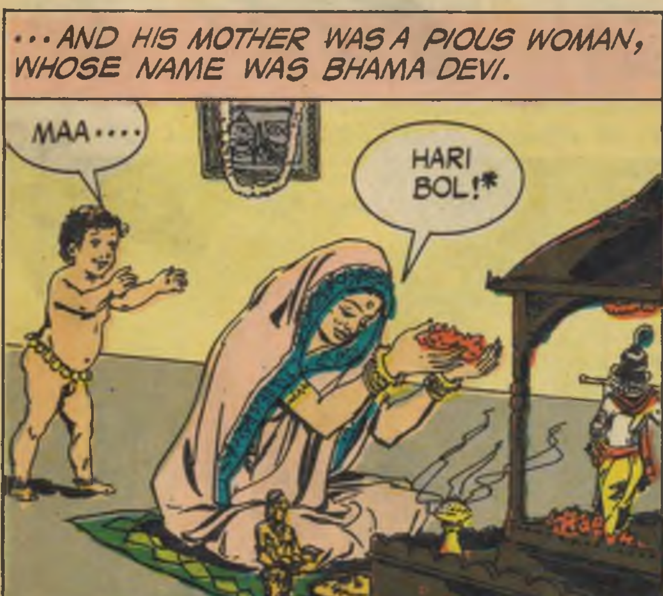
Jayadeva's life is told in the *Bhakta-Mala*, a collection of stories on great devotees by Nabhadas.

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JAYADEVA







* SING OF HARI (VISHNU / KRISHNA)


HUMMING THE NAME OF LORD HARI, BHAMA DEVI BEGAN TO CHURN CURDS.
HARI BOL....
HA...RI... BO...L
WHAT'S THAT YOU SAID?
HARI BO...L
VERY GOOD, MY SON. ALWAYS SING OF HARI. HARI BOL....
HARI... BOL...L
WHEN JAYADEVA WAS SIX YEARS OLD, HE BEGAN TO STUDY AT THE VILLAGE SCHOOL.
THAT'S VERY GOOD FOR A FIRST ATTEMPT!


AS THE YEARS PASSED BY, BHOJADEVA FOUND IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO MAKE ENDS MEET.
I HAD TO BORROW MONEY AGAIN. NIRANJAN BABU HELPED ME THIS TIME.
HE IS A GOOD NEIGHBOUR.
BUT HOW WILL I REPAY THE DEBT?
DON'T WORRY. JAYADEVA WILL SOON BE ABLE TO HELP YOU.
AT THE MENTION OF HIS SON'S NAME, BHOJADEVA FORGOT HIS WORRIES.
MY SON WILL BE A GREAT SCHOLAR.
LOOK AT HIM. HE PREFERS TO READ THE BHAGAWAT PURANA WHILE HIS FRIENDS GO OUT TO PLAY IN THE EVENING.



* SING OF GOVINDA, RADHA'S BELOVED


A FEW WEEKS LATER, JAYADEVA RETURNED TO HIS VILLAGE. AS HE WAS NEARING HIS HOME, NIRANJAN BABU MET HIM.
JAYADEVA, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? IN YOUR ABSENCE BOTH YOUR PARENTS HAVE DIED.
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
YOUR FATHER HAD TAKEN A LOAN FROM ME...
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
...WHICH HE FAILED TO REPAY. SO I HAVE OCCUPIED HIS HOUSE INSTEAD.
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
SUDDENLY —
SMOKE! A HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE IS ON FIRE!
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!


FATHER! FATHER! COME SOON! OUR HOUSE IS ON FIRE.
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
SHOCKED, NIRANJAN BABU STOOD ROOTED TO THE GROUND, BUT JAYADEVA RAN TOWARDS THE BURNING HOUSE.
JAYADEVA!
COME BACK!
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
LOOK! THE FIRE HAS GONE OUT!
NOTHING HAS BEEN BURNT!
HOW STRANGE!
JAYADEVA!



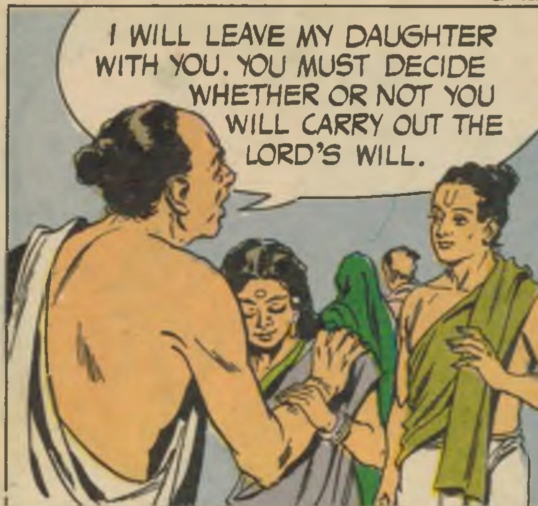
* LORD OF THE UNIVERSE, ANOTHER NAME OF VISHNU


BUT A COWHERD, CARRYING WATER AND CURDS, CAME BY AND...
...GENTLY PLACED JAYADEVA'S HEAD ON HIS LAP.
A LITTLE LATER—
HERE, HAVE SOME CURDS. YOU WILL FEEL BETTER.
RADHE GOVINDA!
SOON JAYADEVA FELT BETTER.
YOU ARE A GOOD, KIND, CHILD. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE IN THE FOREST?
I AM LOOKING AFTER MY CATTLE. I AM A COWHERD.

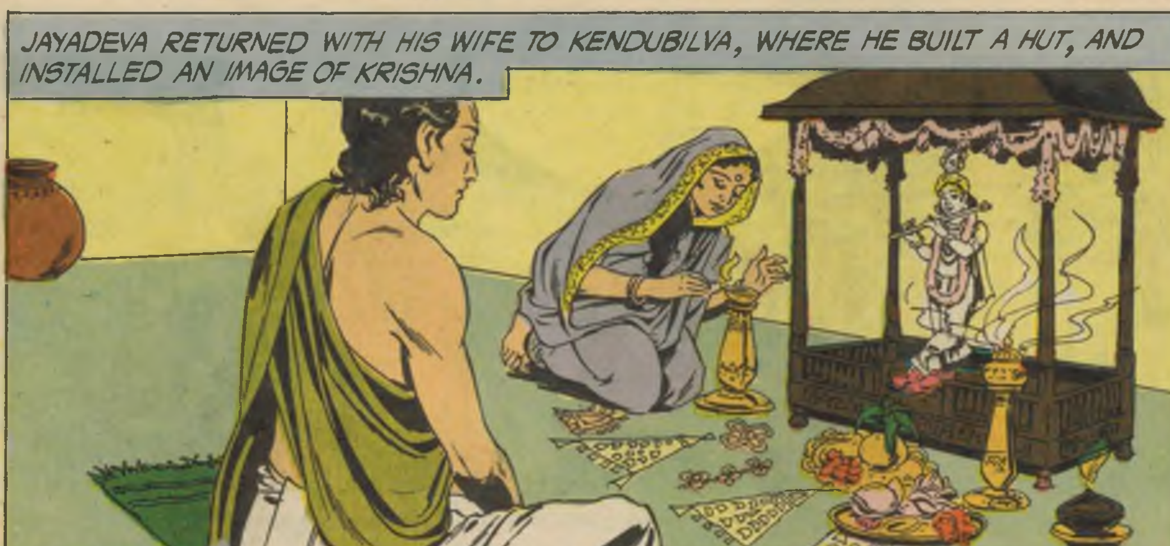

BUT YOU ARE GOING TO PURI, AREN'T YOU? I WILL GO WITH YOU.
SO THE TWO WENT TOGETHER TO PURI.
THERE'S THE TEMPLE!
LORD JAGANNATHA!
SUCH WAS HIS EAGERNESS TO BEHOLD THE LORD THAT JAYADEVA BROKE INTO A RUN.
MY LORD!
THE NEXT MOMENT—
RADHE GOVINDA!

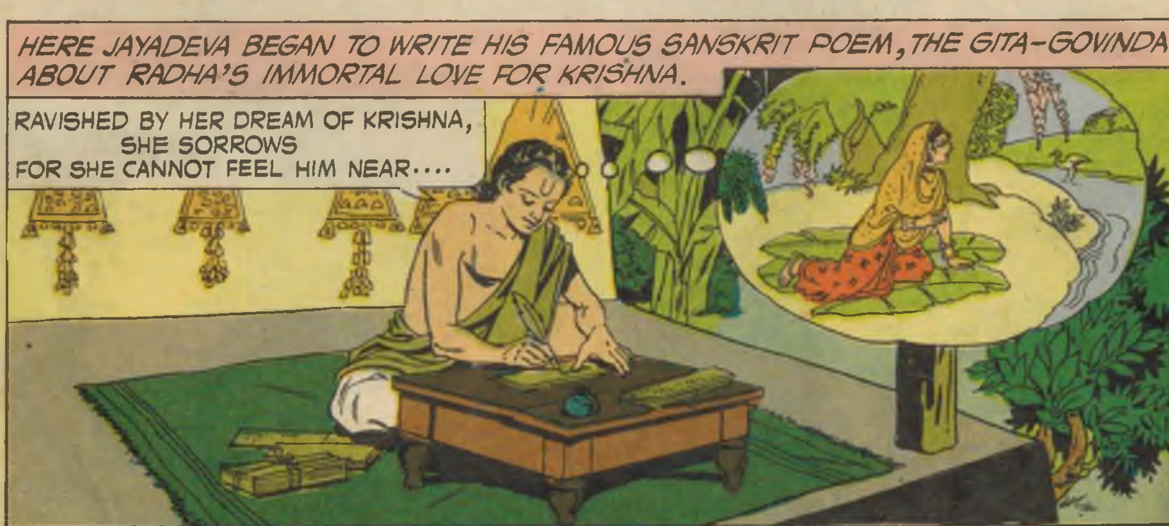

SO IT WAS YOU, LORD KRISHNA! IT WAS YOU WHO REVIVED ME WITH COOL CURDS. AND I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU!
OH! BUT WHERE HAS HE GONE?
RADHE GOVINDA! WHERE ARE YOU?
HE RAN BLINDLY LOOKING FOR KRISHNA...
GOVINDA!
...TILL HE REACHED THE SHORE. IN HIS ECSTASY HE MISTOOK THE SEA FOR THE RIVER YAMUNA, ON WHOSE BANKS LORD KRISHNA HAD SPENT HIS CHILDHOOD.


THERE HE CAUGHT A FLEETING GLIMPSE OF KRISHNA.
GOVINDA!
LATER, WHEN HE RETURNED TO THE TEMPLE, A BRAHMAN SPOKE TO HIM.
I AM SUDEVA SHARMA. YOU ARE JAYADEVA, AREN'T YOU?
YES. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I WANT YOU TO MARRY MY DAUGHTER, PADMAVATI.
BUT THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE! MY LIFE IS DEDICATED TO THE LORD!
LORD JAGANNATHA APPEARED TO ME IN A DREAM AND ASKED ME TO ARRANGE THIS MARRIAGE.
BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF BECOMING A HOUSEHOLDER!


I WILL LEAVE MY DAUGHTER WITH YOU. YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WILL CARRY OUT THE LORD'S WILL.


SUDEVA SHARMA LEFT THE TEMPLE AND, SOON AFTER, JAYADEVA MARRIED PADMAVATI.


JAYADEVA RETURNED WITH HIS WIFE TO KENDUBILVA, WHERE HE BUILT A HUT, AND INSTALLED AN IMAGE OF KRISHNA.


HERE JAYADEVA BEGAN TO WRITE HIS FAMOUS SANSKRIT POEM, THE GITA-GOVINDA, ABOUT RADHA'S IMMORTAL LOVE FOR KRISHNA.
RAVISHED BY HER DREAM OF KRISHNA, SHE SORROWS FOR SHE CANNOT FEEL HIM NEAR....


HER CURVING BROW IS LIKE AN ARCHER'S BOW; THE GLANCES OF HER EYES FLY LIKE LOVE'S SWIFT ARROWS.
HIS DANCING EYES ABIDE IN HER; THEY GAZE AND GAZE WITH RAPTURE....
JAYADEVA CONTINUED TO WRITE ABOUT KRISHNA'S LOVE FOR RADHA.
O RADHA, PLACE YOUR TENDER FEET UPON MY HEAD AS A DIADEM DIVINE....
NO! WOULD GOD LET HIMSELF BE HUMBLED IN THIS WAY BY A WOMAN?

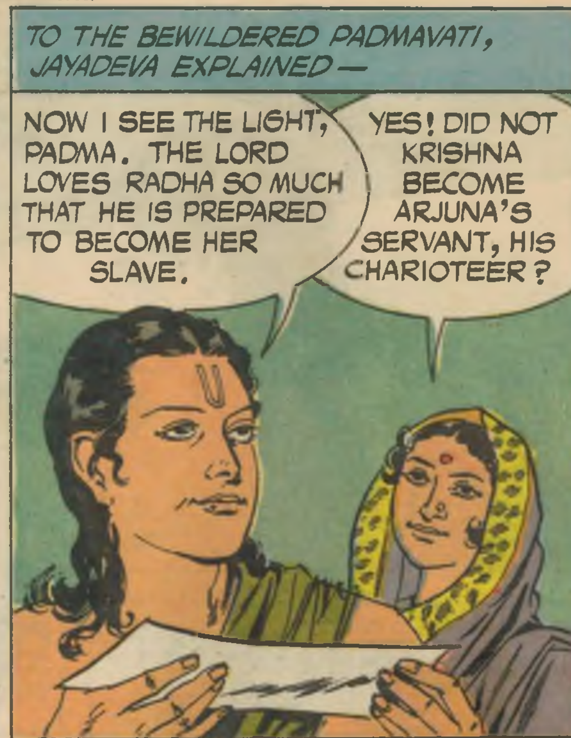

HE REWROTE THE LINES MANY TIMES BUT WAS NOT SATISFIED. THEN HE GOT UP.
PADMAVATI, I AM GOING FOR A DIP IN THE RIVER.
YOUR FOOD WILL BE READY FOR YOU WHEN YOU RETURN.
AS HE WALKED TOWARDS THE RIVER, HE KEPT THINKING OF THE INCOMPLETE VERSE.
I WISH I COULD FINISH THAT VERSE! I'LL FEEL RESTLESS UNTIL I DO.
MEANWHILE AT THE HUT—
HOW DID YOU GET BACK SO SOON?
A VERSE OCCURRED TO ME ON THE WAY. SO I CAME BACK AT ONCE. WILL YOU GIVE ME MY PAPERS, PADMAVATI?
HERE ARE YOUR PAPERS. DO FINISH YOUR WORK SOON.

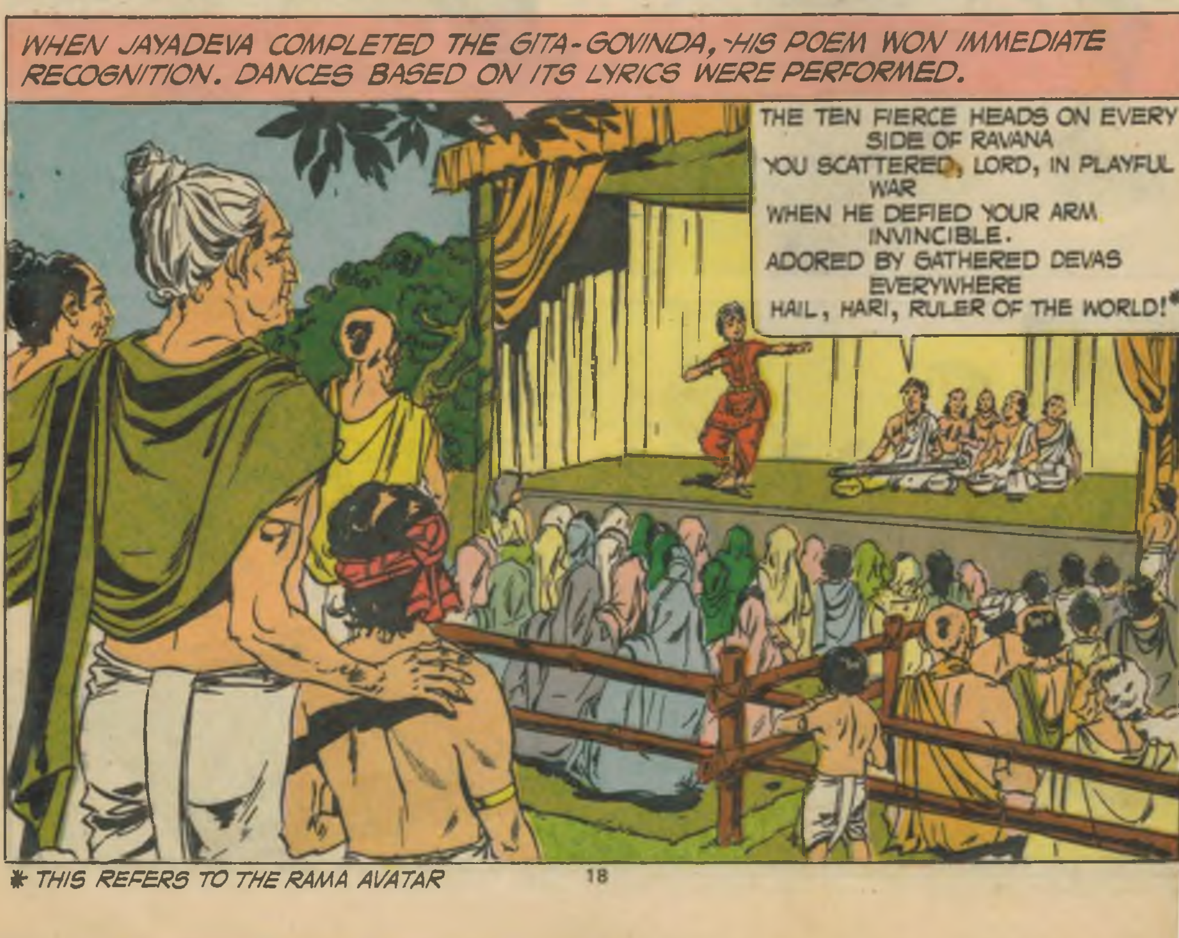

PADMAVATI, I HAD BETTER TAKE A BATH AT HOME.
AS YOU WISH.
A FEW MINUTES LATER—
COME, I HAVE LAID OUT YOUR FOOD.
I WILL GO IN AND REST FOR A WHILE NOW.
A FEW MINUTES LATER, WHEN PADMAVATI HAD JUST SAT DOWN TO HAVE HER OWN MEAL—
HAVE YOU STARTED YOUR MEAL ALREADY, WITHOUT WAITING FOR ME?
BUT YOU HAVE EATEN ALREADY!


I DON'T UNDER-STAND. YOU CAME IN SOME TIME AGO AND WROTE A VERSE AND....
BUT HOW COULD THAT BE? I'VE ONLY JUST RETURNED!
I WROTE A VERSE?
BRING ME MY PAPERS, PLEASE!
HERE THEY ARE.


JAYADEVA EAGERLY READ THE LAST VERSE.
PLACE THOSE TENDER PETALS, YOUR DELICATE FEET, UPON MY HEAD AS A DIADEM DIVINE....
SO THE LORD HIMSELF HAS SANCTIONED WHAT I WAS AFRAID TO EXPRESS!
PADMAVATI, IT WAS LORD KRISHNA HIMSELF WHO CAME IN MY GUISE!
IT WAS LORD KRISHNA? LET'S SEE IF HE IS STILL RESTING IN THE OTHER ROOM.
NO, HE HAS GONE!







* THIS REFERS TO THE RAMA AVATAR



* MODERN ORISSA

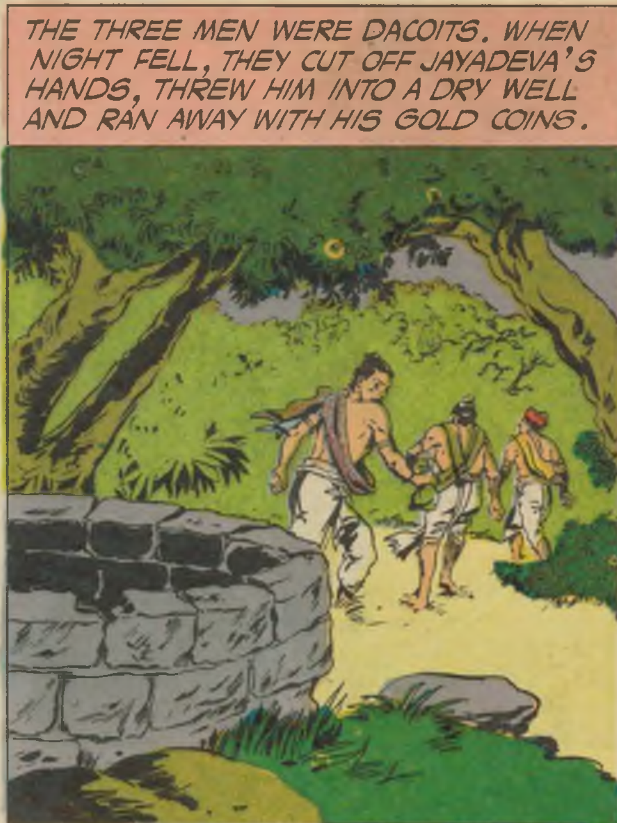

WE WILL PLACE BOTH THE POEMS BEFORE HIM. LET THE LORD HIMSELF GIVE THE VERDICT.
YES, WE WILL LET HIM DECIDE.
THE KING PLACED BOTH VERSIONS BEFORE THE IMAGE AT THE JAGANNATHA TEMPLE.
LORD, ACCEPT MY OFFERING!
THEN HE WENT OUT AND THE TEMPLE DOOR WAS SHUT.
WILL THE LORD ACCEPT MY WORK? OR WILL HE FAVOUR JAYADEVA?
AFTER SOME TIME, THE DOOR WAS OPENED AND THE KING WENT INSIDE.
WHAT! JAYADEVA'S WORK IS ON TOP OF MINE! I ACCEPT YOUR VERDICT, LORD JAGANNATHA!


LATER, THE KING VISITED JAYADEVA TO TELL HIM OF HIS EXPERIENCE.
AND THE LORD, TOO, PREFERRED YOUR WORK, JAYADEVA. YOU ARE BLESSED INDEED!
ANY OFFERING MADE WITH TRUE DEVOTION, O KING, IS ACCEPTED BY THE LORD.
YES, INSTEAD OF HUMBLY OFFERING MY WORK TO GOD, I HAD MY EYES ON WORLDLY APPLAUSE. THAT'S WHY THE LORD REJECTED IT.
LORD JAGANNATHA HAS ACCEPTED YOUR WORK, TOO. I WILL INCLUDE YOUR VERSES IN EACH CHAPTER OF MY WORK. IT IS THE LORD'S WILL.
AFTER SOME TIME—
PADMA, I WANT TO GO ON A PILGRIMAGE.
AS YOU WILL, MY LORD.
SERVE THE POOR IN MY ABSENCE.
ALL YOUR WISHES WILL BE CARRIED OUT.



* IN KORAPUT DISTRICT OF ORISSA









* MODERN BENGAL


GO AND SEE WHO IS THERE.
OH!
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
THERE'S A MAN THERE WITH CUT AND BLEEDING HANDS.
YET HE SEEMS ONLY ABSORBED IN SINGING IN PRAISE OF LORD KRISHNA.
BRING HIM HERE.
THE KING'S MEN HELPED JAYADEVA OUT OF THE WELL.
O HOLY ONE, YOU ARE BLESSED INDEED TO BE ABLE TO SING IN THE FACE OF SUCH SUFFERING.
SUFFERING, TOO, IS A GIFT FROM GOD!


WHO HAS DONE THIS TERRIBLE HARM TO YOU?
IT WAS GOD'S WILL. I BLAME NO ONE.
PLEASE LET ME TAKE YOU TO MY PALACE. MY PHYSICIAN WILL LOOK AFTER YOU. WILL YOU COME?
ALL RIGHT, I WILL.
TENDED BY THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN, JAYADEVA'S WOUNDS HEALED SOON. KING LAKSHMANA SENA WENT TO HIM EVERY DAY TO LISTEN TO HIS SONGS...
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
...AND HIS DISCOURSES.
GUIDE ME, JAYADEVA. HOW MAY I WIN GOD'S GRACE AND GROW SPIRITUALLY?
BE LIKE A FATHER TO YOUR SUBJECTS. FEED GOD'S PEOPLE — THE HOLY MEN AND THE POOR.


THE KING TOOK HIS ADVICE AND BUILT A REST-HOUSE WHERE SHELTER AND FOOD WERE PROVIDED. JAYADEVA PERSONALLY ATTENDED TO THE TRAVELLERS WHO CAME THERE.
GOD'S CHOICEST BLESSINGS BE UPON OUR KING!
MAY HIS COFFERS NEVER GROW EMPTY!
ONE DAY, THE THREE DACOITS WHO HAD TREATED JAYADEVA SO CRUELLY CAME THERE, DISGUISED AS SADHUS.
WELCOME, FRIENDS! CAN I BE OF SERVICE TO YOU?
OH!
LET'S LEAVE AT ONCE...
...BEFORE HE HAS US ARRESTED AND HANGED!
THEY WERE ABOUT TO LEAVE, WHEN—
O KING! THOSE MEN ARE LEAVING. PLEASE GIVE THEM SOME GOLD COINS, AND HAVE YOUR GUARDS ESCORT THEM.
CERTAINLY.


ACCEPT THESE GOLD COINS. MY GUARDS WILL SEE YOU SAFELY TO OUR BORDERS.
MAY GOD BLESS YOU!
ON THE WAY—
WHY IS THE SAINT SO KIND TO YOU?
DO YOU KNOW HIM?
YES, WE KNOW HIM VERY WELL!
HE IS INDEED A SAINT. OUR KING HAS THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR HIM.
A SAINT, INDEED! HE IS A THIEF!
HE WAS TO BE HANGED. BUT WE CAME TO HIS AID.
SO ONLY HIS HANDS WERE CUT OFF!


YOUR SO-CALLED "SAINT" WAS AFRAID WE WOULD REVEAL HIS PAST TO THE KING.
THESE GOLD COINS WERE MEANT TO BUY OUR SILENCE.
SUDDENLY THERE WAS A LOUD RUMBLING NOISE AND THE DACOITS FELL INTO A PIT THAT OPENED BENEATH THEIR FEET.
THE GUARDS RETURNED AND REPORTED TO THE KING WHAT HAD JUST HAPPENED.
THE NEXT MOMENT—
BHAJA RADHE GOVINDAM!
JAYADEVA'S HANDS HAVE BEEN RESTORED!

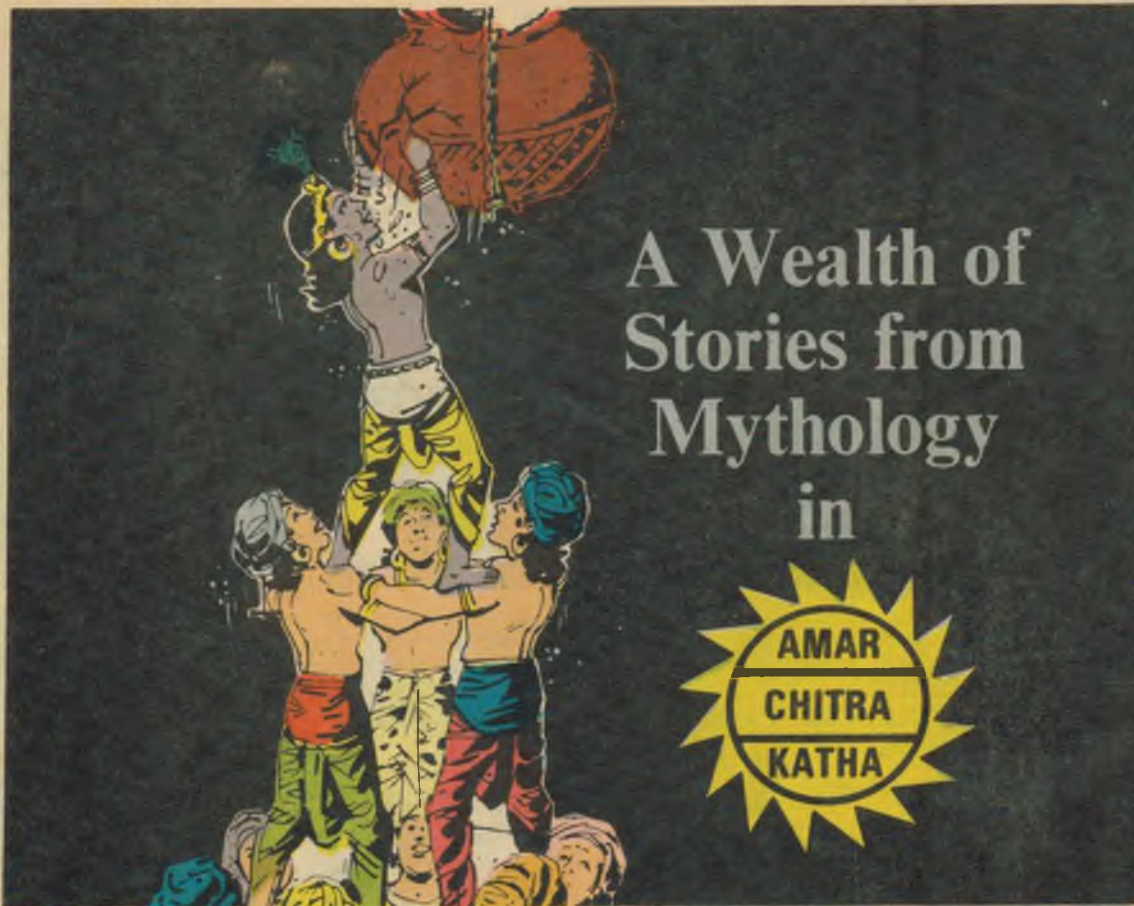


* A CUSTOM THEN PREVALENT, WHICH REQUIRED A HINDU WIDOW TO BURN HERSELF TO DEATH ON HER HUSBAND'S FUNERAL PYRE


A DEVOTED WIFE DOESN'T HAVE TO PERFORM SATI, O QUEEN ...
... FOR SO POWERFUL IS HER LOVE THAT SHE WILL DIE THE MOMENT HER HUSBAND PASSES AWAY.
I WILL PUT HER THROUGH A TEST TO SEE IF THAT IS TRUE.
THE NEXT DAY—
PADMAVATI, YOU MUST TAKE COURAGE.
WHY, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT YOUR HUSBAND IS DEAD.
MY LORD!
PADMAVATI!



O GOD! SHE IS DEAD! WHY DID I DO THIS?
HEARING HER LOUD CRIES, THE KING AND JAYADEVA CAME RUNNING IN.
PUNISH ME! I AM A SINNER. I KILLED PADMAVATI.
COMPOSE YOURSELF, O QUEEN. HAVE FAITH IN LORD JAGANNATHA.
THEN JAYADEVA BEGAN TO RECITE FROM HIS GITA-GOVINDA.
O SEE, WE TOUCH YOUR FEET IN DEEP ADORA-TION. BE KIND TO US, SWEET LORD....
A FEW MOMENTS LATER, PADMAVATI SAT UP AND JOINED HER HUSBAND IN SINGING THE PRAISES OF KRISHNA.
THOSE WHO TO HIM BELONG FIND HERE ALL SWEET DELIGHT. VICTORY, VICTORY TO LORD HARI!
JAYADEVA AND PADMAVATI LIVED LONG. WHEN THEY WERE QUITE OLD THEY WENT TO BRINDAVAN. THEY SPENT THE LAST DAYS OF THEIR LIVES WITH OTHER DEVOTEES, SINGING OF THE GLORY OF LORD KRISHNA.



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